


September 13, 2013

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Milton Dohoney, Jr., City Manager 

Subject: **New Chief is Named to Lead Cincinnati Police Department**

After a national search and extensive interviewing, I am pleased to announce that I have selected Jeffrey Blackwell, currently Deputy Police Chief in Columbus, Ohio, as the next Police Chief for the City of Cincinnati.

Deputy Chief Blackwell is a 26-year veteran of the Columbus Division of Police, which has 1,900 staff members. He has worked in all of the policing sub-divisions in that community. During his tenure, Blackwell has been commended for his outreach to young people, bridge building to significant immigrant populations (Somalians and Latinos), advancing the use of technology, working with communities to reduce crime, and finding ways to reduce operating costs.

He has created and implemented both community and law enforcement programs to improve service delivery in the department. He is the founding member of the program, the "ABC's of CPD and CFD," to provide citizens with insight into the decision-making processes, training and culture of the police officers. It also serves as a forum for officers to understand the perspective of the community members. One of the hallmarks of his career has been his five year service on the Youth Violence Prevention Advisory Board, as a Member and Safety Chair. The panel develops, advocates for, and implements models for preventing youth violence and mitigating its effects on the community. In 1992, Blackwell was commended for helping to solve five cold case homicides because he had built a solid rapport with the community. Jeffrey Blackwell actually made news even before joining the Columbus Police Division. While working as a parking ticket writer in 1987, he chased down a bank robber and tackled him.

He understands that we have to work with the various communities we serve to build a culture of understanding and respect. In particular, I have spoken to him about our need to work in partnership with other organizations to reach teen youth and young adults to move the needle on reducing crime here. Deputy Chief Blackwell is committed to building upon the Collaborative Agreement and the MOA. He will strive to be accessible to the entire community as well as the staff of the department.

Deputy Chief Blackwell has worked his way up in the department, earning the top score on every promotional exam he has taken. He has worked in patrol, traffic, street crime enforcement and cold-case homicide as an officer. Then, after promotion to Sergeant, he also worked in internal affairs, as a burglary detective, and then as a tactical leader in the narcotics area. From 2000 to 2005, he served as a Lieutenant in Patrol, Administration and Traffic, where he developed the traffic management program called "Quick-Clear," a protocol for expeditiously removing accidents and obstructions in the streets.

As Deputy Chief, a position Blackwell has held since 2009, he has worked as the Administrative Deputy Chief responsible for the Business and Personnel Bureau, the Training Bureau, and the Professional Standards Bureau. His current assignment is to oversee the Support Services areas of the Communications Bureau, the Technical Services Bureau, and the Support Operations Bureau. Therefore, he has experience with both the tactical and the administrative side of the job, and brings that to bear as we move Cincinnati's police department forward.

He graduated from the Certified Law Enforcement Executive (CLEE) program in 2011, is a 2008 graduate of the Police Executive Leadership College, attended the Southern Police Institute-Internal Affairs School, graduated from the Columbus Police Academy (OPATA certified), and holds a B.A. in Business Administration from Mt. Vernon Nazarene University.

I'm pleased that he is committed to engaging his officers in promoting a cooperative atmosphere of working in concert with other city agencies to get things accomplished. He has committed to being here and to further the work started under former Chief James Craig.'

Blackwell has had previous interaction with the Cincinnati Police Department as a subject matter expert on police examinations and assessments; he has also done this for Columbus, San Francisco, Miami, and Cleveland. He is a cultural diversity trainer, a certified instructor in basic training for OPATA, and has served as a mentor to youth. He has received numerous awards and commendations for his public service, and is a member of local, state and national policing organizations.

I'd like to thank the community members who served on the Screening Committee. Eleven representatives with a wide range of community experience and knowledge of current policing strategies worked with city staff to recommend a final list of potential candidates. The screening committee including a former police chief, a former prosecuting attorney, Airforce veterans, business leaders, and community members who narrowed the pool to four candidates whom I interviewed.

This group of citizens held two rounds of interviews, interacting with the finalists for several hours each. Additionally, the Administration used the input provided by the community through an online survey and community focus groups just two years ago during the last police chief search to craft the position announcement about the job.

We advertised around the country to professional organizations, and in multiple publications and online listings and processed a pool of individuals.

Deputy Chief Blackwell will begin his tenure September 30. He will come to Cincinnati prior to that and we will arrange an opportunity for you to meet him. I will have details on his swearing in ceremony in the coming days.

I look forward to him starting and know you will join me in welcoming him to Cincinnati.